is, almost as if by deliberate intention, an object lesson in the inextricability of the heterogeneous strands which go to make up any culture worthy of the name. The ultimate base of Scholasticism religiously is Hebraic. But philosophically and scientifically it is Greek, and the Greek came through Syriac and Arabic (and often Hebrew) before it assumed its Latin dress. The fathers of the Church were content to draw on them all without discrimination; and Greek, Arab and Jew jostle one another on their pages in complete promiscuity.

In the fashioning of this syncretistic and surprisingly unified world of knowledge the Jews played a large and important part, in the field of philosophy as well as in those of medicine, mathematics and astronomy (see pp. 170 f., 193 ff.). Among the best-known was the physician Isaac Israeli (''Isaac Judaeus") of Kairouan, whose surviving works include a logical treatise *On Definitions* and an exposition of Aristotelian physics called *On the Elements.* The former in particular comprises a treatment of various philosophical terms, derived ultimately from Aristotle, which were taken over subsequently by the Schoolmen and became the basis of mediaeval Christian philosophical terminology. More important as an original thinker (as it seems, at least, for much of Israeli's work has perished) was Avicebron (Ibn Gabirol), the synagogal poet living under Moslem rule in Spain in the eleventh century, whose *Fons Vitae* (the

first philosophical treatise compiled in that country) was accepted for centuries as the production of a Christian thinker and approved—or disapproved—as one of the typical expressions of Neo-Platonic metaphysics (see pp. 50, 90.). The anti-Semitic William of Auvergne, not suspecting his real identity, termed him "unique, and most notable of all philosophers". It was this remarkable treatise